



# The Megiddo Message

*Devoted to the Cause of Christ*

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THE CHRISTIAN'S BOOK OF ETIQUETTE

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A STORE OF GREAT WEALTH

Vol. 41, No. 26

December 18, 1954

# THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

December 18, 1954

## To aid your Bible study

**The Megiddo Message**—is published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. It defends and ably demonstrates the infallibility, harmony, and Divine inspiration of the Bible. It enables you to give a reason for your faith, to answer the atheist, and to instruct your children correctly. If you are not already a subscriber, **THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE** will be sent to your home every two weeks for six months, absolutely free. Your name and address is all we ask. Subscribers, please send in names of your friends who may be interested in reading this publication, for a free sample copy. No obligation on your part or theirs.

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**THE Megiddo Mission** is an independent organization. It is in no way affiliated with any other religious body. It was founded in the year 1880 by the late Rev. L. T. Nichols, and has been located at the present address in Rochester, N. Y., since 1904.

The word "Megiddo" is of Hebrew origin, its meaning being: True soldiers of God; God is in this place with a band of troops.

It is the firm belief of the Megiddo Mission that the second coming of Jesus Christ and the inauguration of His world-wide Kingdom is imminent. The Bible clearly declares that this event will be preceded by the coming of Elijah the Prophet to herald the glorious Day, to gather the saints, and raise the dead to be ready to meet the Lord when He comes.

Being convinced that these events are near at hand, the Megiddo Mission is earnestly endeavoring to prepare a people to be ready for the Lord's advent. Moral perfection besides purity of doctrine is a direct Biblical command. Among the members of the Megiddo Mission perfection of character is the goal. Invitations are always extended to whomsoever will to come and join us in this work, and partake of the "water of life freely."

## The Story of the Ages

(Our Cover)

UNIQUE as our cover design may appear, it shows the different episodes of how the Lord's message was delivered to His people. From Noah and all the Prophets down to John the Baptist and Jesus the message of the Kingdom is boldly heralded. Then it is carried with new power by the Apostles, and, though silenced through the Dark Ages, is revived in these days and once again the tidings of the Kingdom are heard. And it shall be heard until the appearance of the Prophet Elijah (Mal. 4: 5) with divine power to expand the work on a gigantic scale which will consummate in the establishment of the Kingdom of God with Jesus Christ as Supreme Ruler. Then the hope of those who "looked for a city . . . whose builder and maker is God" shall be realized with a crown for all who have overcome.

**THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE** is published biweekly by the Megiddo Mission Church, 481 Thurston Rd., Rochester 19, N. Y. Subscription rates: One year, \$1.00; 6 months, 50 cents; single copies, 5 cents. In Great Britain and other sterling areas subscription fees are payable through the medium of the International Money Orders which can be secured through the local bank, or International Reply Coupons (current value, eight cents) which can be purchased at the post office. Make checks or Money Orders for all literature payable to the Megiddo Mission Church. Please notify promptly of any change of address. Entered as second-class matter, October 15, 1920, at the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879.

## Is December 25th Christmas?

**I**N AN ARTICLE in a current religious periodical a writer states that "everybody celebrates Christmas," meaning the midwinter season of merriment and extravagant gift-giving. In this he is much mistaken.

Running parallel with the time—about A. D. 378—when December 25th was first incorporated into Church festivals, is evidence of a select group of devout followers of the Christ of Galilee who stoutly refused to participate in this pagan observance. They would not so much as decorate their homes with lights or evergreen boughs in recognition of the occasion. Although their incomppliance to the popular attitude made them the subjects of severe persecution, they yet remained steadfast, true to their convictions.

And today can also be found a group of Christians, "a very small remnant," who, as those early believers, refuse to lay one grain of incense upon the pagan altars. We of the Megiddo Mission Church of Rochester, N. Y., as well as believers scattered over these United States, Canada, and throughout the world, take no part whatever in the December 25th festivities in honor of the sun god, Sol. But when the glorious budding springtime brings again the true anniversary of Christ's birth as revealed in the Scriptures, it is then we celebrate the occasion in a manner and spirit befitting the future King of all the earth.

### IS IT CHRIST OR SANTA CLAUS?

The masses have deviated far from the real meaning and purpose of Christmas, which manifestly is to celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ, not the mockery in evidence during the celebration of Santa Claus' Birthday on Dec. 25. Therefore the members of the Megiddo Mission are particularly interested in restoring Christ to His rightful place in Christmas, and especially in observing the occasion at the God-appointed time of the year.

There is no "Santa" at the Megiddo Mission Christmas. The children of our Mission School have never known personally anything about the be-whiskered old elf of the north pole, which is but a myth, a fable. Such trash, glitter and stupidity as is set before the children of the masses today is no part of Christmas. Nothing farther from the true spirit of Christ could have been devised. But some children are not so easily deceived, for when they see Santa Claus on every corner they ask why there are so many!

The reason why today religionists and non-religionists join so heartily in the observance of this day so utterly pagan is that it opens up to the widest possible latitude "and gives the least possible offense to anyone." Very few question why we do the things we do; what is the origin of our customs. We were born into a world filled with customs; we grew up practicing them, taking them for granted, never questioning why! Of the millions of professed Christians the world over who celebrate December 25 as Christmas, very few are aware that this custom can be traced directly to pagan festivals being celebrated many centuries before Christ was born.

There are millions of children in the world who know nothing whatever about the Nativity, but still know about Santa Claus. Business at large is commercializing upon

this fake until it has become a racket. The people of America should become so ashamed of such a base fraud that they would abolish it forever. Children do not require this falsehood to make them happy. One look at the happy faces of the children of the Megiddo Mission School at true Christmas, Abib first, should convince the most skeptical that the myth of Santa Claus is not in the least necessary to their happiness; in fact, it is completely ignored. They know it is Jesus' Birthday, and they are happy in its celebration and in the abundance of useful presents they receive. They are taught over again the story of the birth of the Christ-child.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE DECEMBER 25TH OBSERVANCE

December 25 was the time chosen for the festivals of most pagan religions. This was due to the fact that a large portion of them were based more or less in sun worship. When the days grew short and dark in the winter, the people feared the sun was dying; and at the turning point when the days began to lengthen, they rejoiced and celebrated the rebirth of the sun. In Rome, this was called the Nativity of the Sun. The Egyptians represented the sun by the image of an infant which was brought out at this season as his birthday and exhibited before his worshipers. The god Mithra was also identified with the sun, so his birthday also fell on Dec. 25. The god Adonis of Greece, the god Chrishna of India, Chang-ti of China, Chris of Chaldea, Sakis of India, were all "born," according to their histories, on Dec. 25.

The Saxons and other northern nations kept a festival at that time of the year in honor of Thor, in which were mingled feasting, drinking and dancing, with sacrifices and religious rites. This was called Yule. And today, what the masses term Christmas is called by the same name. The most famous of all these festivals was the Saturnalia of Rome, which provided the model for most of the popular customs such as carnivals, drinking, dancing, wild revelry, and the use of evergreens, candles, etc. It was this particular pagan festival that was a constant problem to the early Christian Church, since the heathen idol worshipers from which their members were recruited did not want to give up their festivals.

A *History of Christmas* informs us that "the conflict is keen at first; the chief authorities fight tooth and nail against these relics of heathendom, these devilish rites, but mankind's instinctive paganism is insuppressible, the practices continue as ritual, though losing much of their meaning, and the church, weary of denouncing, comes to wink at them, while the pagan joy in earthly life begins to color her own festival . . . grown old and tolerant, she has long since ceased to attack them." The heathen customs were too popular to be overcome by Christian influence; and in the end the church took over the date of their chief festival, the Saturnalia, Dec. 25, and changed the name from the birthday of the SUN to the Birthday of the SON of God.

From the foregoing we can perceive how rapidly and how easily the apostate church broadened out the way by accepting the pagan days and ceremonies, by which means she enticed the pagan hordes into her fold.



## THE YULE-TREE AND SUN WORSHIP

Many countries claim the honor of giving the first Christmas tree to the world. In primitive days the Germans worshiped a pagan god, Thor, and held the oak as sacred, sacrificing human beings beneath its spreading branches at festival times. Ancient sun worshipers decorated trees, because they thought that in some way a spreading tree was like the sun. They employed lights to represent lightning; apples, nuts and balls for sun, moon, and stars; figures of animals to denote their animal sacrifices. And so the ancient pagan symbolism and practices have persisted in spite of all efforts to discourage them.

It was not until the fourth century that Dec. 25 was kept as Christmas. The historian Mosheim states:

"Augustine represents Christmas as neither derived from apostolic usage nor sanctioned by any general council, and that there can be no reasonable doubt that it had its rise after the Council of Nice, 325. . . . It is generally admitted that the designation of the 25th of December for the festival was first made about the middle of the fourth century. Some among the Catholics, and many among the Protestants, think that the day was chosen because it was the day on which the Romans celebrated the festival of *natalis solis*, or the sun's crossing the southern solstice, and because the establishment of a Christian festival at that season of the year might supplant the Saturnalia and other corrupting festivals of the pagans. The Christian holidays have borne so close a resemblance, wherever they have been observed, to the Roman Saturnalia and Juel feast of the ancient Goths, as to afford strong presumption of an unhappy alliance between them from the first."

It would seem that in commemorating the birth of the world's greatest character, which proved a turning point in the world's history, humanity would want something more substantial than mere tradition upon which to base the practice of celebrating Dec. 25 for the Nativity. It is well known by all who have taken the pains to investigate, that the day as kept by the great masses rests wholly upon a tradition of the Latin church; although the Catholic Encyclopedia frankly states that "Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church. . . . Pagan customs, centering around the January calends, gravitated to Christmas." It was not until the fifth century that the church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol. The Latin church incorporated the feast into its calendar under the name of "The Carnival," as were many other heathen customs under the guise of Christian practices.

## JESUS WAS BORN IN THE SPRING

Now we shall give a few items of proof that the glorious springtime is the correct time for the celebration of the birthday of the Christ-child. The entire world is wrong not only concerning the true date of Christmas, but also as to the beginning of the year. January was never the first month of God's year, and not even the old Roman year which always began in the spring. The historian states:

"In the chronicles of the middle ages much confusion arose on account of the different epochs assumed for the commencement of the Christian year. Dionysius commenced the year with the 25th of March, which manner of dating was continued in Pisa even down to the year 1745. . . . January was not the first month in the British Isles till the reformation of the calendar was made in 1752."

Think of it! a little over two hundred years ago, in England the Roman year began in March, in the spring, at about the same time as the Bible year. That it was begun at that season is clearly proved from the Latin numerals, for example: *septem*, meaning seven, from which September was named; *octo*, eight; *novem*, nine; *decem*, ten. December was the tenth month of the Roman year; but since the change all is confusion, and it now stands as the twelfth month according to man's reckoning.

And now for another example of pagan confusion: How can they start reckoning time from the birth of Christ and then wait a week before they begin the year? Christ's birth marks the *end* of B. C. and the commencement of A. D., and yet there is a period of seven days before beginning the new year! What is that week called? According to the present count of time it is neither B. C. nor A. D. The fact is, that what ever day is proved to be the true Christmas—seeing that our time dates from the birth of Christ—that day will also be New Year's Day.

The members of the Megiddo Mission have discarded the pagan confusion of the masses, and when we celebrate Christmas on Abib first, we celebrate New Year's Day as well.

## GOD'S YEAR BEGINS WITH ABIB, THE SPRING MONTH

We will let the blessed Bible tell us when God's year begins. In Exodus 12:1, 2 we are told: "The Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." What is the name of this first month of the year for God's people? The answer is found in Ex. 13:4, "the month Abib." In Deut. 16:1 Abib is stated to be the first month, the month in which the Lord brought His people out of Egyptian bondage. This first month is sometimes called Nisan. The word "month" has a striking definition in the original language: "the new moon, the day of the new moon, which was a festival of the ancient Hebrews; a lunar month beginning at the new moon." In the Hebrew Lexicon the meaning of the name Abib is given: "The month of green ears, beginning at the new moon of March or April. The first month of the old year as instituted on coming out of the land of Egypt. It also denotes the month of flowers."

Is there any record that God ever changed the beginning of the year? No. Who then instituted January as the first month of the year? The pagans. They named the first month of their year after the pagan god of war, Janus. What a striking contrast—one from Jehovah, the other from paganism!

We learn from Ex. 12:6 and Lev. 23:5 that the 14th of Abib was the Passover. We also find that the first three days of Abib were special feast days. The family of David, as we are told in I. Sam. 20:5, 6, kept this time; for when King Saul through jealousy was seeking to slay him, David said to Jonathan: "Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat. . . . If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run . . . to Bethlehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice [feast] there for all the family." The time of this feast is confirmed in Psalm 81:3, 4, "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day; for this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob."

## MARY AND JOSEPH ATTENDED THE NEW MOON FEAST

Now remember that there was a yearly feast at Bethlehem at the time of the new moon for all the family of

David; and as Mary and Joseph were both of the house and lineage of David, how fitting that they should go up to Bethlehem to observe the new moon feast of Abib! God's people were still keeping the Bible time, the year beginning with Abib—not pagan January—when Jesus was born. In Luke 2: 8, 11 we learn that there were shepherds abiding in the fields, watching their flock by night, when angelic voices proclaimed to them: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

No shepherds would have been in the open fields watching their flocks on the 25th of December. From *Schaff's Church History* we learn: "The time of pasturing in Palestine, which has but two seasons, the dry and the wet, or summer and winter, begins . . . in March and lasts until November, when the herds are brought in from the fields and kept until the close of February." And in an encyclopedia we are told that the birth of Christ "could not at all events have fallen in December or January, for at that time of the year the flocks are not found in the open fields during the night, but in pens. . . . Nor did the shepherds any longer lodge in huts in the fields. . . . Moreover a census, which made traveling necessary, would not have been ordered at this season." This is strong evidence that the birth of Jesus could not have occurred in December or January.

The very fact that there were so many Israelites gathered at Bethlehem, so much so that there was no room in the inn for Mary, demonstrates that it was the time of

the Abib or new moon and Passover feasts. It seems certain that simply to register, there would not have been such a multitude congregated there. History informs us that registration was not compulsory upon Mary, and also furnishes the fact that this multitudinous assembly was according to "the custom of attending the yearly Passover."

We are informed in Luke 2: 41, 42 that Jesus' "parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover." That feast occurred on the fourteenth of Abib. They were still observing the same time as given to Moses, still keeping the Abib feasts. "And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast." If in Abib Jesus was twelve years old, He necessarily was born twelve years before in the month Abib. Twelve years before, Mary and Joseph had gone up to keep the Abib feasts, and angels had proclaimed the birth of the Babe born in a manger; and now at twelve years of age in the month of Abib He was filled with wisdom and understanding, confounding the doctors and lawyers in the Temple.

Many people argue that the time of celebrating Christ's birth is unimportant, and ask, "Why be different?"

We reply, "Why be wrong, when it is just as easy—even if not so popular—to be right?" To follow the crowd in a known error seems neither honest nor courageous, nor even sensible. The Almighty God gave the command in Exodus 23: 2, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."

## WHEN SHALL WE GET TO BE WITH THE LORD?

A CORRESPONDENT in Hattiesburg, Miss., asks a question. We would warn this friend that the scriptural answer to this question will differ widely from his former teaching and perhaps preconceived ideas on the subject. We sincerely hope that all will apply fairness in weighing the Biblical evidence given. Although to do so may call for readjustment of your viewpoint on certain basic beliefs, yet fair-minded persons often find such adjustments necessary. We should always remember that a thousand errors are not worth one truth.

The question runs: "When a born-again Christian is relieved of the burden of the flesh, does his spirit go direct to be with the Lord?"

The frank answer to this question, as supported by scriptural evidence, is: No; for no one goes immediately at death to be with the Lord.

This question, covering the progress of a human being from an unregenerated soul through death to its final reward with Jesus, reflects the thinking of so-called fundamentalists. However, the Bible teaches no such program. In II. Timothy 4: 3, 4, the Apostle Paul foretells that in the last days men will not "endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." The belief of going immediately to heaven at death is one of these "fables."

The Bible plan is: first, a scriptural knowledge of the way of life; acceptance of it; then working out one's own salvation with fear and trembling; the sleep of death—unless death is circumvented by the second appearing of Christ during our lifetime—Judgment, and the receiving of the reward. In this way we get to be with the Lord. We know that many of the religious beliefs held by the

masses today are only fables, borrowed from pagan sources, and contrary to the plain teachings of the Scriptures.

We will now take up your first proposition: "When a born-again Christian . . ." To the average churchman this means a changed life which comes about as the result of conversion at a revival meeting or some other condition of stress or excitement. It is supposed that such a person no longer can sin, and is saved for time and eternity. But that is not true; we all are subject to temptation as long as mortal life shall last. Paul the Apostle was a much greater man morally than any of us, and he said: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I. Cor. 9: 27). In that way he revealed that he was not yet saved, not yet beyond sinning. He left an example that it is for us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2: 12), make ourselves worthy of salvation, then after Judgment we shall be born again, born of the Spirit, born into immortal life.

The words of Jesus to Nicodemus about being born again have reference especially to the time when worthy Christians shall have their vile bodies changed, made "like unto the angels" so they can go and come with the freedom of the wind, and not to a change of heart at conversion. He said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. . . . The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This text often is quoted, "so is the Spirit." It does not read that way; but instead, "so is every one that is born of the Spirit," every one who receives the reward of immortality.



Quite often such texts as Eccl. 12: 7 are cited as proof that intelligence survives the death of the body. But let us see: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The popular conception of the "spirit" is, that it is the intellectual part of man. But if that be true, God would contradict what had just been stated in ch. 9: 5, "the dead know not anything." Thought ceases completely at death.

The Hebrew word *ruach*, translated "spirit," means "breath, the breath of life." For example, see Job 27: 1, "All the while my breath is in me, the spirit of God is in my nostrils." Here the location of the "spirit" is plainly given; it is in the nostrils. But what of its composition? A marginal reference gives the word "breath" for "spirit." Also it is so rendered in James 2: 26, "For as the body without the spirit [breath] is dead, so faith without works is dead also." The spirit is the breath; that is all that leaves the body and goes back to the Giver at death.

The words of Paul in Phil. 1: 23 have been used in an endeavor to prove that he expected his reward at death. But in II. Tim. 4: 8 he showed this was not his hope: "Henceforth there is *laid up* for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at *that day*: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love *his appearing*." It was the return of Christ which Paul longed for, and that is the very meaning of the Greek word *analuō*, here rendered "depart." In Luke 12: 36 the same original word is translated "return." Wilson, in the Emphatic Diaglott, renders Phil. 1: 23, "I am indeed, hard pressed by two things; I have an earnest desire for the returning, and being with Christ, since it is very much to be preferred."

The Bible hope rests upon the resurrection of the body and in bodily form, and with the same identity as it had when death came. We shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. We read in Job 19: 25, 26, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

The 15th chapter of First Corinthians is definite on the resurrection of the dead, especially vs. 14, 18, 20, 23, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. . . . But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. . . . But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Thus we see that all hope of a future life depends upon a resurrection from the dead.

We have the promise in I. Thess. 4: 16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise. . . ." We do not now possess immortality. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (I. Cor. 15: 53, 54). We shall not receive immortality at death, but must wait for Christ to bring it to the faithful at His coming. He said in Rev. 22: 12, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Let us repeat again the Bible program: Christ is to return to earth in person. The sleeping dead shall rise; they, with the living, shall be judged, and if found worthy of eternal life be given immortality. If unworthy, they shall die the second death, pass into total oblivion.

## CONCERNING STONES

FROM earliest times, in every country of the world, men have collected attractive stones, minerals and unusual fossils. The first stone collector may have been some savage whose eye admired the beauty of a colored pebble or shining piece of rock crystal.

Today the real interest for the stone collector lies in the minerals which come from the rocks. Born of the mighty forces of Nature—sometimes deep in the earth, sometimes at or near the surface—æons ago, or even in recent times, these minerals give a broad range of beauty and interest to what the average person may think of as merely rocks.

The collector enjoys minerals as jewels of rare beauty; for the diamond, ruby, sapphire and other precious gems are minerals.

God, during the past six thousand years, has, with infinite care and patience, been taking from the earth's vast reservoir of humanity, brilliant "stones" for His collection. These "stones" are not taken from the quarry flawless, but are created, carved, and shaped with the elements of abrasives, fire and water. To be created, one must be cut, pared down and made smooth by the act of polishing.

His tools are the best, nor will He cause any to have one blow too many; for, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Ps. 103: 13, 14).

Numerous attempts have been made to "grow" diamonds in the laboratory, but to no avail. This is one of Nature's most closely guarded secrets.

God, who knows the secrets of diamond making, has created specimens for His collection excelling all others for value, brilliancy and beautiful display of warm, prismatic colors.

To the world, His spiritual gems appear insignificant, dull little pebbles, scarcely worth a second glance; but the great Connoisseur knows their worth: "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isa. 48: 10). When the trials and rebukes come, it is because He is endeavoring to chip and polish us that we may become a priceless, living stone. He knows best how and where to chip in order to attain the maximum brilliance of His finished product.

It takes on the average of ten tons of ore to produce two carats of diamonds. One carat is about the size of a June pea. So with us, when taken from the quarry the expert Craftsman begins to cut away the haughty spirit, pride and arrogance, and the finished gem is much smaller than the original lump.

If, after being magnified ten times, a diamond shows no imperfections to the trained eye, it may be sold as legally perfect. "The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." "He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death" (I. Chron. 28: 9; Job 28: 3). If there are fissures, cracks or dark spots in our stone when finished, it will remain that way and it will be cast away forever.

Diamonds are said to be of the first water when very transparent, and of the second and third water as the transparency decreases. It is by a continuous washing in the pure water of Truth that our character becomes transparent. Paul's prayer for the Philippian brethren was that their love might "grow richer and richer in

knowledge and perfect insight, so that you may have a sense of what is vital, and may be men of transparent character and blameless life, in preparation for the day of Christ" (Phil. 1: 9, 10—Goodspeed).

Agate is a hard variety of quartz which takes a high polish and offers an almost infinite variety of colors and patterns of moss, plume, iris, landscapes and many others.

If we are entering into this work of polishing with energy, our specimen will produce the portrait of Christ. Only those who are saying, "I will, God helping me, I will perform this act of polishing today," will have His pure character, genuine and precious, an image of right doing, good conduct and feelings, upon their stone.

There will be judges to inspect our polished agate stone. They will inspect to see that every feature is correct; not one mistake will pass that inspection. If we try to daub our own whims and notions into our image, the finished stone will be marred and blurred. Not one particle of self can be superimposed upon our pattern. God will not accept a double-minded man. "Look," saith He, "that thou make them after the pattern which was showed thee in the mount" (Ex. 25: 40).

When the patient Chinese wish to bring their jade ornaments to a fine polish, they place the crude shapes in a leather pouch and shake them together until the rough edges are rounded off. The friction of one against the other smooths an otherwise unsightly mineral.

It takes hard knocks, the abrasives of daily living, to remove the unsightly bumps in our character in order for us to have a beauty and a life that will never wear out. It is this friction that teaches us humility, longsuffering and gentleness; that removes pride and haughtiness.

Naturally we do not like the rough spots taken off. We object to the way the molding and the shaping is done. We shrink to have it known that we have unsightly bumps that need to be removed; but this daily contact with our fellow man reveals our weaknesses, our defects. It is the means which God has provided, whereby we can become formed into a perfect stone.

Many minerals are named in allusion to some outstanding property. Stinkfluss is a name applied in the middle eighteen hundreds by German miners to a peculiar variety of fluorite. When struck with a hammer this mineral emits a highly unpleasant odor, reported to have caused headaches and nausea among the miners.

This is a mineral which will never find a place in God's collection. If not preaching the fruits of the spirit by our conduct, we are a stench in God's nostrils. When the hammer falls, if we refuse to see ourselves and do not repent but murmur and complain and begin to justify our evil traits, the name of the mineral which we have hewn is—Stinkfluss. We have been digging in the wrong mine and our specimen is a useless mineral to God. "Your incense is an abomination unto me," saith the Lord, "the calling of your assemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." The only thing that will avail is to put away the iniquity "from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well" (Isa. 1: 13—16).

Many minerals which are ordinarily dull and drab-looking are transformed by fluorescent light into dazzling splashes of color of nearly every hue. Such minerals glow in the dark when viewed under invisible ultraviolet light, revealing a beauty and color that remain hidden in ordinary daylight.

Before this stone can give visible light, the mind must be illuminated with the Light of Truth. Only in proportion to the quantity of light which the mind receives, can it give back light. If the light is but a glimmer, if it lacks

faith and confidence, it is because we are not thinking right. We have allowed the insidious evils, doubt, and fear, to creep in and His Light cannot penetrate and we have no light for others to behold. We are walking in the light of our own spark instead of the glorious sun of God's Light and Love.

The *faith* that we are God's children, saints in the making; the *faith* that we are a vital part of this great universe; that we are a living part of the plan of the ages, will cause our stone to pulsate and glow with power and Light. If we become mentally and morally what God intends us to be, we shall be physically what God intends us to be.

The Wise Man says, "Guard above all things, guard your inner self, for so you live and prosper." And Paul adds, "Never let your zeal flag; maintain the spiritual glow" (Prov. 4: 23; Rom. 12: 11—Moffatt).

Mineral collections such as God is collecting can never be equalled, for they contain the finest specimens the world has even known. What a grand time is in store for the faithful when He comes to gather His jewels! "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. 3: 17).

## THE CHRISTIAN'S BOOK OF ETIQUETTE

**I**N polite society there are certain rules of conduct which are familiarly called etiquette. The degree and manner in which these rules are observed indicates much about an individual. It tells whether one is well bred and trained—sometimes it is self-training—and whether he is thoughtful and considerate. To quite a degree it determines one's acceptability in the affairs of mankind. If overdone to the point of affectation, of course that leaves an impression also. But etiquette which comes from good judgment and common sense as to what is proper and seemly and when properly modified with humility is pleasant to behold.

The world, no doubt, has many books on this subject; but detailed and extensive though they be, they cannot equal the Christian's book of etiquette, the Bible.

Here is the ultimate instructor in decorum. Here is the primer and senior course to the finest conduct of which humanity is capable. This Book is the word of the Creator Himself who is training and culturing His children to the high standard of behavior required of His eternal associates. God's very excellent plan for His earth calls for gentlemen and noble women. The material He uses will be carefully developed and carefully selected. And so let us consider some of His rules of conduct and their application.

The primary rules are given first. The national law of Moses contained the first essentials. While it could not make the comers thereunto perfect nor give eternal life, as said the Apostle Paul, yet, in the words of the historian, it "... prescribed the conduct of a gentleman."

But we need most to practice those rules which will give life. That is important above all else. Thus we ask, How does a Christian conduct himself? How does he react to different circumstances? What are his manners as he moves among his fellow men?

All through the Book are found rules to govern every circumstance of life. Many personal characteristics are given by the Master in Matthew: "Blessed are the poor



in spirit: . . . Blessed are the meek: . . . Blessed are the merciful" and "the peacemakers." There is little room for offensive manners here. Perhaps the greatest rule of conduct ever uttered came through the Master also. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." This famous rule needs no elaboration.

The great Apostle to us Gentiles was a learned man in the ways of Christianity as well as in the affairs of men. He said, "Love" which is to keep the commandments of God, "has good manners." This whole 13th chapter of First Corinthians is excellent on the manners of a Christian.

The Christian is a Christian under all circumstances; cheerful when visiting the sick; he rejoices in the Lord always yet lives soberly and godly in this present world. A Christian is patient in trial; perfectly patient, said James. When chastened for faults he endures quietly. When falsely accused he endures quietly even when he has been doing good. "Indeed that is part of your calling," said Peter (I. Pet. 2: 20). Further along this line, if on the other hand it becomes the duty of the Christian to correct another, his rule of conduct is still of the same fine temper, "If a man should be detected in some sin, my brothers, the spiritual ones among you should quietly set him back on the right path" (Gal. 6: 1).

The importance of good manners under such a circumstance goes without saying, for in reproof is a most vital and certainly one of the most delicate situations that humankind ever encounters. In this matter, as in no other, true greatness of character, or littleness, will show itself. Worldly etiquette says never mention another's faults; but that is not God's way. He has been instructing His people all down through the ages to ". . . in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him." Yet He says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor." It takes but elementary experience to realize that this is a big order, but how delightful to behold when properly conducted. The Wise Man said, "A mild answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger" (Prov. 15: 1).

Another detail of good Christian manners is revealed in Galatians 6: 10, "Let us then do good to all men as the opportunity offers, especially to those who belong to the Christian household."

In speech the Christian's code is clear. "They are not to speak evil of any man, they must not be argumentative but gentle, showing themselves agreeable to everybody" (Titus 3: 2)—as far as possible.

Relative to his superiors, a Christian is submissive and respectful (I. Pet. 5: 5). A Christian never pays back evil for evil (Rom. 12: 17), and is no respecter of persons but is impartial in judgment.

Before the world a Christian sets a good example that they may see his good works and glorify God, yet he loves not the world neither the things that are in the world. Before his brethren the Christian is "an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

God's rules of conduct eliminate all but the finest manners. Against such there is no law. Truly He prescribes the conduct of a gentleman. The Bible is a wonderful book of etiquette. Christian conduct is a great and lifetime subject and these are characteristics that can be found nowhere but among God's people. We need to study it more, for when its wisdom and knowledge enters our heart, then discretion and understanding shall govern our manners, and Christian decorum shall rule our behavior. This is the conduct that will make life pleasant and ends in an eternal reward.

The Bible does not delve into the wearisome, arbitrary and unimportant matters as does the world to the exclusion of vital things, such as just how to handle one's fork at the table, etc. No, God is not dealing in such things, all matters of personal opinion, but He is concerned about the weightier matters of judgment, mercy and faith. That is the conduct that is most important to God and God's gentlemen. Indeed, what is etiquette and what are good manners, save decency, kindness and consideration for our fellow man?

But like other good things, this godly conduct is rare, very rare; but it is vitally and fundamentally important to God. He is patiently working and waiting for those who will learn to conduct themselves according to His book of etiquette. Those who practice godly manners to perfection, He will choose for His eternal society.

## BECOMING RECONCILED TO GOD

**T**RANSLATED from the original Greek, "reconcile" or "reconciliation" is defined: "A change from enmity to friendship, a thorough change." Reconciliation with God is changing ourselves from enemies to friends with Him. To be on terms of friendship with God is no small thing. We have the direct command from Paul in II. Cor. 5: 20, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." This reconciliation or change is not achieved in a moment but is a continual growth, a gradual climbing day by day unto greater heights, reaching up to God. All our lives we shall find ourselves reaching up to God, because His ways, actions and thoughts are so much higher than ours. Isaiah 55: 8, 9 gives us the comparison: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Our thoughts and ways cannot actually compare with God's, for His are infinite and beyond our comprehension, while ours are the product of a weak and finite mind.

Becoming humble is the basic requirement of friendship, because on humility all other virtues are built. A Christian is strong only when he is humble. The Wise Man knew how important humility is when he penned these words, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3: 5, 6). Only by remembering that we are dependent on God for all that we have and are, can we expect His guiding hand in time of peace or adversity.

Faith is a key to friendship. We must have faith in God and in His Word. Faith is a living, growing quality that will increase each day as we see the centuries-old prophecies of the Bible coming true. A tried and tested formula for acquiring faith is set forth in Romans 10: 17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Faith will be a constant bulwark against the forces of evil on every hand. The Apostle called it a "shield of faith." On sunny days, it will be a constant source of joy, and on dark days it will be a sure comforter.

Two requisites vitally important to reconciliation are willingness and obedience. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword," says the Divine Record. There must be a willingness to do the work. Then,



an ear must be attuned to hear the statutes of the Lord and to carry them out.

Jesus said in John 15:14,15, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; . . . but I have called you friends." It would be wonderful indeed to be called a friend by Jesus, and this can be our privileged lot, by obeying the qualifying term—"If ye do whatsoever I command you." Many will believe what God has written, but if they fail to live it out in their daily lives, it is of no avail.

The original definition stated reconciliation as being a "thorough change." It is not a partial or halfway change but a thorough one. God requires of us our *all*—every talent, every thought and action. Our whole being must be consecrated to His service. Halfhearted devotion is worse than none at all, and a reserved portion for self can be our destruction. Remember the solemn warning of Jesus reaching down through the ages, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Again in Revelation 3:15, 16 the dire end of those who prove lukewarm is given: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. . . . So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

In that soon-coming Day, those who have shown themselves to be the true and sincere friends of God shall stand before the Great Judge and hear the wonderful words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

## CONQUERORS

**B**EFORE a man can act effectively in any arena of this life, he must know what he wants to do and to accomplish. The men who make history are not those who drift along, taking things as they come or waiting for something to turn up. And such is the power of words that the aims and ends which shape our lives become largely a matter of definition. What we call a thing does not change its nature, but it does affect powerfully our attitude toward it.

In the world we find, as we should expect, great confusion in definition. One man's definition of success, of pleasure, of justice, or righteousness, is not another's; and in the absence of an accepted standard there is great freedom—and great chaos.

Being assured that God's thoughts are not man's thoughts, but far higher, we shall expect to find His definitions of the things which affect our lives to be entirely different from man's; and so we do find them. Emphatically is this true when we come to define the word "conqueror."

A widely accepted definition of a conqueror is one who is strong enough and ruthless enough to impose his will by force on his fellow men, who exalts himself at the expense of others. Of course, there are exceptions—there are other conquests, such as the scientist or humanitarian leader who conquers a social problem or a disease—but these are the "small print." Generally speaking, the great names in history and in popular fancy have been the killers, the masterful ruffians who have fattened on human misery.

In the days when the Eternal had an earthly kingdom, war was often a necessity, but it was never idealized or glorified. In fact, King David, as a man of war who had performed his duty well, was thereby rendered unworthy to build the house of the Lord.

On the other hand, much space and the greatest value is given to the victories of the spirit. Many and glorious are the promises held out to "him that overcometh"—not his fellow men, but himself. Proverbs 16:32 wraps the whole question up in a neat package: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

This excludes the Alexanders and Caesars, the Napoleons and Hitlers of all time, men who could conquer others but could not or would not rule themselves. For all their tinsel reputation, they were miserable failures; small men in the sight of God. Of such it is written, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." To crucify the flesh with its lusts and desires was a task and an ideal which was far, far beyond their coarse and narrow minds; nor is it a small assignment for any man. When we undertake self-mastery in earnest, we shall find we have no time to think of gaining power over other men.

To be a conqueror is glorious, but it is not enough. History has demonstrated this fact again and again. The most brilliant conquests are short-lived; the victory gained in the field, often is cancelled at the conference table; nations rise and fall, civilizations ebb and flow, and there is nothing abiding. In our own generation our nation and its allies won a great war and disastrously lost the peace.

So our spiritual conquests can easily be lost if we do not "follow through" with vigilance and skill. "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us," said the great Apostle. More than conquerors—fortifying and holding the ground taken, going from victory to victory, to the very end of the war and the final triumph! Success depends on staying power no less than drive. "Steady patience is what you need, so that after doing the will of God you may get what you have been promised" (Hebrews 10:36—Moffatt).

"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved," for then their Commander-in-Chief will take over and make the conquest imperishable. Our earthly warfare and our victory, while glorious, will not be a final goal but a stepping-stone, a point of departure, from which we shall go forth to conquer the world for God, and to perform deeds of greatness in His name throughout eternity.

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## Meditations on the Word

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 44: 20, 21, "If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart."

The first and greatest of God's commandments is clear and concise: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Mark 12:30). Being all-wise and eternal and possessing the power to bless and prosper in this life and to bestow life eternal, God is just in requiring full allegiance. As He is capable of granting to us the ultimate—endless life—and will delight to do so for a short life of obedient service, He has a perfect right to require of us all that we can give—a surrendered life, wholly devoted to seeking and doing His will.

Who, then, are the strange gods? or what is idolatry? We may easily scorn the gods of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, and, in fact, of all the heathen; we may despise the idols of wood, gold, or stone in far-off lands; but it is equally as easy to decline into ungodliness of thought, imagination, and unchristian practice. Idolatry may be described as undue devotion to unworthy objects. It is intense admiration, veneration, or love, of any person or thing. And, further, it may be any pursuit in life on which our heart is set. Pleasure seeking may be idolatry; a hobby, a profession, a business enterprise, may monopolize our attention and dominate our lives. Strange gods are these, gods of our own creation. In short, anything that takes our attention from serving God wholeheartedly, anything we place in our affection more than God, or His service, is an idol or strange god.

We should remember that it is of religious people that the words of our text were spoken, and particularly those who know the true God, who understand His Word and have covenanted to serve Him. When we speak of forgetting something, it denotes that we once had it in mind. The words of the familiar hymn are fitting here:

"Jesus calls us from the worship  
Of the vain world's golden store,  
From each idol that would keep us,  
Saying 'Christian, love Me more.'"

God demands more love of us than we have for the distracting things about us.

If we really believed that in Him we "live and move and have our being," that to Him all hearts are open, all desires known, and that from Him no secrets are hid, we would be more concerned about rendering to Him the reverence due. By faith, let us deliberately welcome into our minds the inspiring thoughts about God and His attributes; thereby we shall expel any inclination to waywardness, to seeking our own pleasures or ambitions.

The tendency of double-minded humanity through the centuries has been to serve God only halfheartedly. They professed that they knew Him, but by works they denied Him. They praised Him with their lips, but their hearts were far from Him. It was "in the dark" that the ancients of the house of Israel performed their unholy rites (Ezek. 8:12). They said, "The Lord seeth us not." In this they were unmindful of Israel's warning long before: "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Isa. 29:

15). Had they served the Lord in singleness of heart they would not have fallen into such apostasy.

God had a covenant with Israel. They were to be His people, holy and free from the defilements of the heathen nations about them. They were to be, as He pictured (Jeremiah 3), His bride, or wife, chaste and pure, having no other allegiance but Him. His promises of blessing went with the covenant, and all He had promised had been fulfilled. They enjoyed the prosperity of the land; they were guarded from the enmity of surrounding nations; they had men of intelligence capable of ruling justly. But in spite of all the goodness on the part of God, they forgot. But their sins were not hid. God searched them out and His judgments followed for disobedience.

Is the world of today very different from Israel before her downfall? Is it not concerned merely with the things of the present? Material progress is decidedly in advance of spiritual progress. Business, work, pleasures, crowd out true religion and genuine piety. A form is maintained, but the real lessons of godly conduct are not practiced.

But here we are principally concerned with the loyalty of those who understand the precepts of God and are striving to live by them. The Prophet Ezekiel (14:2) spoke of a class who had set up idols in their hearts. As we stated before, the "strange gods" may be anything that keeps us from serving God wholeheartedly, so we wish to stress the need of care and watchfulness. We need to watch the stream of thoughts that flows through our mind. Evil imaginations, unlawful desires, seep in so subtly and in such attractive disguises that ere we know it we erect an idol in our heart—and worship it. Particularly we should be watchful when our mental powers are less active and imagination may run free.

There is no substitute for loyalty to God. Loyalty is that quality which prompts a person to be true in his undertaking to serve God above all else. It means one has a definite destination, a fixed purpose in life and steadfastness in his pursuit. With loyalty to God comes power, poise, purpose, a thorough strengthening of character. Whatever duties have to be discharged are not burdensome to the loyal. Indeed, work is for the worker. The reward is for the doer. The Master's service is raised to the highest plane when love for the task is fused with the effort.

We know the reward for loyal service to God will be grand; and, on the other hand, the reward for evil doing, or "forgetting," will be dismal. But there are at least some—or perhaps many—who feel and know they have done wrong in the past; have stretched out their hands to "strange gods," yet are desirous of returning to God and right. They have the desire to return, yet stagger at the magnitude of the task that confronts them. Here is counsel worthy to be tried and proven:

As the habit was formed so it must be broken. As we accumulated mental trash that cluttered the mind and crowded out the heavenly things, so now we must discard it. As we yielded to temptation, now we must refuse. As thread by thread strands of doubt bound us into bondage, so now thread by thread we must unwind them until we stand free. As we builded, stone by stone, a wall that separated us from God, so now we ourselves must toil, and stone by stone tear down the wall until it is overthrown.

Worshiping strange gods may be pleasing for a season, but only for a season. To God are known all our ways, and He will recompense according to our works. Let us all examine ourselves as in His presence; let us see our idolatries for what they are; let us deliberately seek His help that we may cast them all away and no longer allow them to separate us from Him.



## ITEMS FROM OUR MAIL BAG

A subscriber at Calgary, Alta., Can., sends a kind word.

"Dear Sirs: I wish to renew my subscription for THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE. Please find amount for one year. I really enjoy the MESSAGE; it has helped me a great deal to see the light. God bless you in your every effort.

Yours very truly, E— T—."

From a subscriber at Huntsville, Muskoka Co., Ont., is this renewal.

"Dear Sir: I have been wondering if my MEGIDDO MESSAGE subscription is nearly worn out, as it seems quite awhile since I sent you that amount by mail, so I will send you one dollar for renewal of same; hoping this will not be too late, as I have just received copy for Nov. 20. So hope this will be good for a year now. I surely like the good letters I see from other people that take it— a nice lot of good spiritual reading on inside of last page of paper. So am hoping it may grow and spread the Gospel far and wide. Wishing you every success, I remain,

Miss E— T. H—."

A new subscriber at Huntoon, Sask., Can., renews subscription. He would find the two volumes of *The Known Bible and Its Defense* helpful, price \$2.50.

"Dear Sir: Am enclosing amount for THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE, as we sure miss it. . . Please send the MESSAGE all the time. When my subscription runs out I'll renew it as soon as possible. Is there any other literature we can get? We already have the set of eleven pamphlets, which are very good. Please let us know. Thanking you,

R— M—."

We are glad to hear from this brother at Lindsay, Ont.

"Dear Friend: Here I am sending you renewal for another year, and I thank you ever so much for keeping on sending the MESSAGE to me. But I won't forget you for it, but will try and have it ready for you in time from now on, for I do like your paper; it is nice to read, and I will do all I can for you. I may leave here; but if I do, will write you and give you my new address. Good-by and thank you.

Mr. T— B—."

A letter of thanks has reached us from Oundle, Nr. Peterboro, England.

"Dear Friends: Thank you for the MESSAGE which has arrived regularly. I am forwarding subscription for another year. I am sure all are very deeply indebted to the late Mr. Nichols (and to those who followed so faithfully afterwards) for the priceless opportunity we have of understanding the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. After I have read the paper I pass it on in the hope someone else may benefit. I know of no other paper like it.

Yours sincerely, H. L. S—."

A brother at Gloversville, N. Y., replies to the letter-of-the-month.

"Dear Brother: I received your very informative letter, and was glad to be reminded of all those promises—so wonderful, that were we not able to read them from the pages of the Bible we could hardly believe them. Only God could make these promises, for only He can keep them. What more could we ask for? What less should we work for?

"Certainly the more we learn of the Truth, the more anxious we become to cast off our evil ways. You stated that the evening shades had been stretched out. How thankful some of us should be for that! I think the prom-

ise in Isa. 1:18, 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,' is a wonderful promise, and leaves no excuse for saying 'Too late' or 'there is no use trying now.' We should be so thankful our great leader has called our attention to these promises; we can now go to work, that we may share in those promises, rather than just wait for that trip up to Heaven! E— A. K—."

From this brother's wife is a good reply to the Maranatha letter.

"Dear Sister: I received your very nice letter. Such letters strengthen me and help me to overcome the evils of this world, that we face daily. I try to do better every day, and it is not so easy; but I know that by constant trying I will be able to forsake all my sins and become pure of heart. I am very happy in trying to overcome evil and know I will be much happier when I get farther along on that road to perfection. The prize offered is so wonderful we should try with all our hearts.

Maranatha! Sister A— K—."

Another excellent letter is from a sister at Elgin, Ore.

"Dear Sister: I have under consideration the fruitful field or Kingdom of God, and what we must do to obtain it. We who have been enlightened on this subject know the Church is not the Kingdom; there will be a real literal Kingdom set up at Christ's return, and the faithful are the heirs, as the Apostle James says: 'Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?'

"We are heirs, and there are certain conditions we must fulfill: wash and become clean, cease to do evil and learn to do well, that which is right in God's sight; then an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If we prepare ourselves, walk with care, and live in obedience to God's commandments, we shall be worthy of sharing the glory and honor and wonderful blessings in that glorious fruitful field or Kingdom. The Prophet declares in Isa. 32:16, 'Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.' I want to have righteousness, that I may remain in the field.

Mrs. J— G—."

The brother at Wausau, Wis., is thankful for the letter-of-the-month which he terms "a message of comfort and hope." We quote in part from his good letter.

"Dear Brother: . . . Yes, it is most wonderful to have someone tell the old, old story of God's great and precious promises—of His plan that cannot fail. O that wonderful promise that we find recorded in Num. 14:21, 'But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.' To think that sickness, death and all the wickedness in this present world shall be done away with is almost incomprehensible to the human mind and especially so to them that are carnally minded, but to them who have become new creatures in Christ, who have become spiritually minded, these wonderful promises of God become more comprehensible and assuring of fulfillment; for He is faithful that promised. We are commanded not to be sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience shall inherit the promises. Truly, it is the hope of every true Christian, that Christ will return and rid this earth of everything that defiles, and make it a fit place to dwell in. . . .

"To your question as to what promise in the Bible has helped me, I would say the one in I. Cor. 2:9, 10. . . .

With Christian love, J— T—."

## A STORE OF GREAT WEALTH

There's nothing on earth that we prize any more,  
And nothing on which we will set greater store,  
Than flourishing health; from the crib to the grave  
We zealously guard all the health that we have.  
Of ointments and nostrums our stock is complete;  
We follow suggestions, and watch what we eat.  
We're vitamin minded; and when we get sick  
We send for the doctor, and send for him quick.

We value our health—it is hard to replace;  
And many now carry insurance, in case  
An accident comes. We rejoice, as we should,  
To hear that the health of a friend has been good.  
Good health is a blessing, beyond any doubt,  
A boon which so many must struggle without;  
But just within reach is a far greater wealth—  
The blessing God offers of *spiritual health*.

To feel and sleep well, and be able to eat,  
Is not as important as eating the meat  
Of which Jesus spoke, that of learning God's will,  
And being made strong, His commands to fulfill.  
To learn of God's will to the children of men  
We must search the Scriptures again and again;  
For there 'tis revealed to each one who will seek,  
And be like the Saviour, both humble and meek.

Good health is one thing that the rich can not buy,  
Yet even the poor may have ample supply  
Of spiritual health, if obeying God's word,  
If by the good Tidings their hearts have been stirred.  
If we cast our sins to the moles and the bats  
We will, in due time, wax exceedingly fat;  
And when we acknowledge His chastening Rod  
We'll flourish like trees in the garden of God.

And that is not all, for the promise is given,  
That Jesus, the Saviour, returning from heaven,  
Will bring immortality to every one  
Who labors on earth, that His will may be done.  
Then pain and disease will forever take flight,  
And sickness shall be as a dream of the night;  
For all will be blest in obeying God's will,  
And none shall be heard to remark, "I am ill."

We cannot conceive of the health we shall share  
In that day of bliss, if we now will prepare  
By dying to sin, as we read in the Word,  
And keeping the precepts of Jesus, our Lord.  
So let us give heed to our spiritual health,  
And add every day to this store of great wealth.  
Then, when we see Jesus descending from heaven,  
We know that this wonderful health will be given.

—L. L. S.



